

***"... even a few years' study of philosophy will bring definite benefit into the life of a student. It will help him in all sorts of ways, unconsciously, here on earth and it will help him very definitely after death during his life in the next world of being."***

***– Paul Brunton***

## **Study Guide**

### ***Is there a Higher Meaning?***

Is there a higher purpose with our life—for everyone alike—behind our smaller ones?

This is a question that we often have reason to ask ourselves, not least in difficult times when dark forces are feverishly active to create disharmony, division and chaos in society as well as in our interior life.

We are searching for a credible and convincing answer, but how do we find it?

*Paul Brunton's* texts come to our aid. On the website [pbpeaceandfreedom.se](http://pbpeaceandfreedom.se), he explains in a detailed and initiated way what the higher meaning is—and how it can be realized.

***Paul Brunton says: "... there exists a supreme reality beyond the awareness of sense or intellect; there exists a soul in man which is rooted in this reality; the higher purpose of human life is to establish full consciousness of and communion with this soul..."***

***"... if he looks to final ends he will know the right means. If he finds out what is the larger purpose behind the smaller ones, it will be immensely easier to know what to do in any given situation when he has to choose between opposite courses."***

If we indeed understand this deeper meaning of our life and do everything, we could possibly do to realize it—in thought, word and deed—we cease to create bad karma. Instead, we will henceforth contribute to creating a world based on respect and compassion for all living beings.

***"There is a deep joy in this growing perception of life's larger meaning, a profound comfort in the ever increasing knowledge of its beneficent purpose."***

***"When our eyes have been opened to the true meaning of man, when we know that this is not to be found in his transient personality but in his enduring essence, life will possess a quality it never had before."***

### ***Choose your level of ambition***

The website's step-by-step structure makes it possible to choose a level of ambition for our studies and conversations. Here are three possibilities:

1. The lowest level includes steps 1 and 2. Here the texts are given.
2. The middle level comprises steps 1-3. Here the *Library* is added with its more than 4,000 translations of selected texts from *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton*. Here we search for a deeper understanding.

Go to the webpage named *Step 3. The Library* and follow the instructions.

3. The highest level includes steps 1-4. Here are *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton* where all the 34,000 short and longer texts are at our disposal—free of charge!

But how do we find our way through all these texts (16 volumes) to find what we are looking for? The task could be felt overwhelming!

The answer is that the structure of *The Library* is exactly the same as the one of *The Notebooks*. We therefore use the same search methods in step 4 as in step 3.

Let's try it out! We choose a philosophical building block that we really want to learn more about, for example *Overself and Ego*. Afterwards, we have much more knowledge about *the Overself* and the ego than is given in the translations in steps 1-3, and will be increasingly convinced of the great value of feeling at home in *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton*.

In a simple and natural way, we have—as an added bonus—been introduced to *Paul Brunton's* masterful spiritual/philosophical encyclopedia *The Notebooks of Paul Brunton*.

## **Preparations**

Before each meeting, we prepare carefully by studying the texts—at the level of ambition that the group has chosen—in the section that will be discussed during the upcoming meeting. The more carefully this is done, the more everyone gets out of the conversations.

During these preparatory studies, an understanding will grow as to what questions or texts would be most important to talk about.

Which texts make the strongest impression? Make a note of their identifications (the group of figures below each text). In this way, a personal PB library of great value for the future can gradually be created.

The study guide has eight meetings. Maybe more are needed? This applies not least to *The Mystery* and *On the Short Path* sections.

The group meets every other week.

Each gathering should begin with some minutes of stillness.

## **The first meeting**

Already from the beginning, we get a good overview of the contents of the course by listening together to seven presentations (step 1) of philosophic building blocks—one from each section:

- From *The Mystery*: *Overself and Ego*
- ” *The Ego Illusion*: *The Ego*
- “ *The Turning Point*: *The Highest Purpose*
- ” *On the Long Path*: *The Ego in Focus*
- ” *On the Short Path*: *The Overself in Focus*

- “ *Born again: The Enlightenment*
- “ *A Noble Task: But one big Family*

After each presentation, we talk about it.

Then the level of ambition for the studies and conversations is determined.

### ***The second meeting***

In preparation for this meeting, the texts in *The Mystery* section are studied.

We will talk about two levels of consciousness—a lower one called the underself or ego and a higher one called the higher self, the Overself or the Soul. The higher consciousness is at the heart of interest for those who want to understand what the higher purpose of our life on earth is.

***“The Overself is the Higher mind in man, his divine soul as distinguished from his human-animal nature. It is the same as Plato’s ‘nous’.”***

***“These intuitive feelings tell us that a deeper kind of Being is at the base of our ordinary consciousness.”***

***“The experience explains a man to himself for the first time, lights up the fact that he lives in two planes at one and the same time. It reveals his ego as the illusion which envelops his consciousness and his Overself as the reality behind his consciousness.”***

***“Although It is at the very heart of human beings, the Overself is very far from their present level of consciousness. Nothing could be closer, yet this is the supreme paradox of our existence and the strangest enigma confronting our thought.”***

### ***The third meeting***

Study the texts in the section *The Ego Illusion*.

The ego, the lower self, which deceives, misleads and manipulates us is the subject of the day.

***“The ego poses as being the only self, the real self, the whole self.”***

***“The ego stands in the way: its own presence annuls awareness of the presence of the Overself. But this need not be so. Correct and deeper understanding of what the self is, proper adjustment between the individual and the universal in consciousness, will bring enlightenment.”***

***“The thoughts and feelings which flow like a river through our consciousness make up the surface self. But underneath them there is a deeper self which, being an emanation from divine reality, constitutes our true self.”***

***“To know what his real I is not, is a first and most important step toward knowing what it really is. Indeed, it has a liberating effect.”***

## **The fourth meeting**

Study the texts in the Turning Point section.

We have a choice.

***"He can identify himself with ego or with Overself."***

***"There is no third way open to us. The world is rapidly moving into a new age. We may either cling to the remnants of the age that is vanishing or we may meet the age which is coming. We must make our choice..."***

***"It is both the irony and tragedy of life that we use up its strictly limited quota of years in pursuits which we come later to see as worthless and in desires which we find bring pain with their fulfilment. The dying man, who sees the cinema-film of his past flash in review before his mental eyes, discovers this irony and feels this tragedy."***

***"If men only knew how glorious, how rich, how satisfying this inner life really is, they would not hesitate for a moment to forsake all those things which bar their way to it"***.

## **The fifth meeting**

Study the texts in the section On the Long Path.

The Quest has two essentially different parts—the Long and the Short Path—which complement each other. The ego gets focused through the Long Path.

***"To obtain a balanced result it is necessary to make a balanced approach and not to rely on a single kind of effort only. The moral character must become involved in the quest of upliftment; the intellectual faculty must work at the study, as well as reflect upon the lessons of, life itself; the intuition must be unfolded by persistent daily practice of meditation; and the everyday practical life must try to express the ideals learned."***

***"Moral disciplines have a definite place in life to make us better human beings but they do not lift us to the Overself's level. The Long Path, to which they belong, has a humanitarian value but not a magically transcendent one."***

***"His first effort is to find the obstacles which retard the enlightenment; his second, to remove them. This constitutes the Long Path."***

***"The divine part of our being is always there; why then is it not available to us? We have to practise making ourselves available to It. We have to pause, listen inwardly, feel for Its blessed presence. For this purpose meditation is a valuable help, a real need."***

***"The following of these exercises is indispensable to train the mind, to create a habit which will make entry into the meditative mood as easy in the end as it is hard in the beginning."***

## **The sixth meeting**

Study the texts in the section On the Short Path.

On the short path, the Overself is the center of attention.

***"The Short Path provides him with the chance of making a fresh start, of gaining new inspiration, more joy."***

***"The Long Path calls for a continued effort of the will, the Short one for a continued loving attention."***

***"He is to keep the thought of the goal itself continually before him, to give the mental consciousness as its principal occupation a meditation on the Overself. This is the basis of Short Path work ..."***

***"The Long Path developed in him through yoga-meditation the capacity to find the inner Stillness. The Short Path added to it (1) the knowledge that the Stillness is himself, and (2) the practice of continuing remembrance to be the Stillness."***

***"... a fastening of attention upon the goal instead of the way to it. It calls for a revolution, dethroning the ego from being the centre of attention and replacing it by the Overself."***

***"Know Consciousness without its objects—and you are free!"***

### ***The seventh meeting***

Study the texts in the section *Born again*.

***"... man's initiative pushes on toward the goal, whilst divine Grace draws him to it ..."***

The short path yields results. After all the experiences during many lives on earth, we are finally at the goal—enlightenment. The higher meaning of life has been realized.

***"... there will come suddenly unexpectedly and in the dead of night, as it were, a tremendous Realization of the egoless state, a tremendous feeling of liberation from itself as it has known itself, a tremendous awareness of the infinitude, universality, and intelligence of life ..."***

***"... he feels that his true self is part of eternity and this other self is a foolish thing he is glad to be rid of."***

### ***The eighth meeting***

Study the texts in the section *A Noble Task*.

***"The world's need is silently crying out for inspired and selfless people who will awaken the world's attention to spiritual values ..."***

***"... In the present chaotic and critical state of the world, it is better for those with spiritual ideals to throw their weight into positive service of humanity. We must do something to objectify these ideals."***

***"This is the truth that must be proclaimed to our generation, that the Soul is with us here and now--not in some remote world or distant time, not when the body expires--and that it is our joy and strength to find it."***

We listen together to the texts in section *A noble task* and then go through what each person, and what the group as a whole can do...

One possibility is to inform people of the fact that [pbpeaceandfreedom.se](http://pbpeaceandfreedom.se) exists and is worth visiting.

***"The duty to which we are called is not to propagate ideas but to offer them ..."***